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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/092,463	03/08/2002	Noriko Soma	1076.1074	1195

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EXAMINER

BADII, BEHRANG

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3621

DATE MAILED: 03/08/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/092,463

Applicant(s)

SOMA, NORIKO

Examiner

Behrang Badii

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 March 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 08 March 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1-17 have been examined.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1-3 and 15-17 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by DiDomizio et al., U.S. patent 6,523,028.

As per claim 1, DiDomizio et al. discloses a search system for searching design asset information to find information (information), which a user has privilege to access and which is requested by the user, and for providing the user with the privileged and requested information (abstract, Fig. 1), the search system comprising:

a first memory (storage, database) for storing the design asset information (information) (col.1, 50-67; Fig. 8);

a processor for retrieving information, which the user has privilege to access, from the design asset information (col.1, 50-67; fig. 8); and

a second memory for storing the retrieved privileged information (col.1, 50-67; fig. 8).

As per claim 2, DiDomizio et al. discloses a database for collecting the design asset information (information) and a second database for collecting access control information (information) used to set access privileges (clearance level) to the design asset information (information), the processor refers to the access control information (information) to retrieve the privileged information from the first database, and the second memory includes a third database for collecting the privileged information (col.2, 41-61; fig's. 1-2, 8-9).

As per claim 3, DiDomizio et al. discloses access control information (information), including information of access privilege groups (clearance) for setting the access privileges to the design asset information and information for defining at least one of the access privilege groups to which the user belongs, and wherein the third database is generated for each of the access privilege groups (col.3, 39-54; fig's. 1-2,4,8-9).

As per claims 15-17, DiDomizio et al. discloses searching the design asset information (information) stored in a memory, the method comprising the steps of:

retrieving information, which a user has privilege to access, from the design asset information when the user logs in to a server computer from at least one client computer (col.3, 39-54; fig's. 1-2,4,8-9);

generating a retrieved information database by collecting the retrieved privileged information (abstract, fig's. 1-2,8-9);

searching the retrieved information database, when the user inputs a search query through the client computer, for the privileged information that matches the search query (abstract; fig's. 1-2,8-9); and
providing the matched privileged information to the client computer (fig's. 8-9).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 4-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over DiDomizio et al., U.S. patent 6,523,028 as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Erb et al., U.S. patent 6,246,678.

As per claim 4, DiDomizio et al. discloses a search system for searching design asset information to find information, which a user has privilege to access and which is requested by the user, and for providing the user with the privileged and requested information as described above. DiDomizio et al. does not disclose a database which is generated when the user starts a session and is held until the session is terminated (sessions started and terminated by a user). Erb et al. discloses a database which is generated when the user starts a session and is held until the session is terminated (sessions started and terminated by a user) (col.34, 1-4). It would have been obvious to modify DiDomizio to include a database which is generated when the user starts a

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session and is held until the session is terminated (sessions started and terminated by a user) such as that taught by Erb et al. in order to manage the employment of the search system by users via recording how much each user has used the search system.

As per claim 5, DiDomizio et al. and Erb et al. further disclose at least one server (database server) (Erb et al.: col.8 1-67; fig's 3-4).including the first database, the second database, and the third database (DiDomizio: fig's.1-2); and

at least one client computer connected to the server through a network (DiDomizio: fig's.1-2);

wherein the user inputs a search query in the client computer, the client computer sends the search query to the server, the server acquires design asset information that matches the search query from the third database, and the server provides the acquired design asset information to the client computer (DiDomizio: abstract; fig's.1-2).

As per claim 6, DiDomizio et al. further discloses wherein the design asset information is IP catalogue information (information)that includes management information, substantial data, and category classification information of IP catalogues, wherein the processor refers to the access control information to retrieve the management information, the substantial data, and the category classification information of IP catalogues, which the user has privilege to access, and wherein the third database includes a first retrieved information database for collecting the retrieved management information, a second retrieved information database for collecting the retrieved substantial data, and a third retrieved information database for collecting the

retrieved category classification information (databases that are connected and composed of different parts) (abstract; fig's. 1-2).

As per claim 7, DiDomizio et al. further discloses searching the first retrieved information database (searching a database) for the management information of IP catalogues that match the search query of the user and provides the management information of the matched IP catalogues to the client computer (abstract; fig's. 1-2,8-9).

As per claim 8, DiDomizio et al. further discloses searching the second retrieved information database (searching a database) for the substantial data of IP catalogues that match the search query of the user and provides the substantial data of the matched IP catalogues to the client computer (abstract; fig's. 1-2,8-9).

As per claim 9, DiDomizio et al. further discloses searching the third retrieved information database (searching a database) for the category classification information of IP catalogues that match the search query of the user and provides the category classification information of the matched IP catalogues to the client computer (abstract; fig's. 1-2,8-9).

As per claim 10, DiDomizio et al. and Erb et al. further disclose a system for searching design asset information comprising:

at least one server computer (database server) (Erb et al.: col. 8,1-67; fig's. 3-4);
and

at least one client computer connected to the at least one server computer
(DiDomizio et al.: fig's. 1-2), wherein the server computer includes:

a first memory for storing the design asset information (col.1, 50-67; fig's. 8-9); and

a processor for retrieving information, which a user has privilege to access, from the design asset information and generating a retrieved information database of the retrieved privileged information when the user logs in to the server computer from the client computer, wherein, when the user inputs a search query in the client computer and sends the search query to the server computer, the server computer searches the retrieved information database for privileged information that matches the users query and provides the matched privileged information to the client computer (storing information into a database and retrieving information from a database) (col.1, 50-67; col.3, 39-54; fig's. 1-2,8-9).

As per claim 11, DiDomizio et al. discloses a search system as discussed above. DiDomizio et al. does not discloses a database being held from when the user logs in to the server computer to when the user logs out from the server computer. Erb et al. discloses a database being held from when the user logs in to the server computer to when the user logs out from the server computer (opening and closing a session) (col.34,1-4). It would have been obvious to modify DiDmizio et al. to include a database being held from when the user logs in to the server computer to when the user logs out from the server computer (opening and closing a session) such as that taught by Erb et al. in order to create a session in which the user can use the system including the database during the time the user is logged in.

As per claim 12, DiDomizio et al. further discloses wherein the user belongs to at least one group, wherein the privileged information is information, which the group the user belongs to has privilege to access (user has privilege/clearance to acquire information) (col.3,39-54; fig's.1-2,4,8-9).

As per claim 13, DiDomizio et al. further discloses a memory including an original database for collecting the design asset information and a control database for collecting access control information of the design asset information (memory/storage which includes databases), wherein the processor refers to the access control information to retrieve the privileged information from the original database (processor retrieving information from the database) (abstract; col.1, 50-67; fig's. 1-2,8-9).

As per claim 14, DiDomizio et al. further discloses each piece of the design asset information includes an index and substantial data (information categorized into groups), and wherein the control database includes a definition database defining a group to which the user belongs, a catalogue access privilege database defining groups having privilege to access the index, and a substantial data access privilege database defining groups having privilege to access the substantial data (databases including two or more groups) (abstract; col.3, 39-54; fig's. 1-2,4,8-9).

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Marpe et al. (U.S. patent 6,581,039) discloses a method of searching for a report in a database including a plurality of items generated by multiple users.

Caughran et al. (U.S. patent 6,381,604) discloses A centralized test information management system and method for its operation are disclosed.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Behrang Badii whose telephone number is 703-305-0530. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Trammell can be reached on 703-305-9768. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



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